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ABSTRACT

Basic to the process of effective communication are the elements of practice and understanding. This paper proposes using a 9- to 10-lesson unit employing the one-point speech as a vehicle for practice prior to a longer, more involved activity. The advantages to this approach are that the student is initiated without being overwhelmed, the skills necessary are transitional and utilitarian, and it is a good point at which to demonstrate for the student the usefulness in communication of careful topic selection and subject matter limitation. An outline for this type of one-point lesson provides material sources, objectives, activities, and a unit plan. (TS)

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# THE ONE-POINT SPEECH AS A UNIT IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION

by
Ric Floren*
and
Jack Upshaw

I know you believe you understood what you think I said, but I am not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant.

## Basic Assumptions

In the Speech Communication syllabus for the basic course (111), it is assumed that the following goals have been reached in the class sessions meeting previous to this unit:

I. Orientation and Introduction to the Course. As the opening collegiate sessions are often used for bookkeeping and cognitive conditioning in commons coffee behavior, it is assumed that class sessions will not really begin until the second meeting of the class. At this session, the instructor will take care of class enrollment, explanation of the broad objectives of the course and outlining class procedures and the units to be covered.

II. Course Content before the unit on the one-point speech:
   1. Definition and understanding of the term "Communication." (Meanings are in people?)
   2. Distinguishing language from speech.
   3. Communication as a process.

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4. Descriptive factors of audience analysis.

5. Motivation in communication and perhaps motivation in the classroom.

6. Skill in research and use of library reference material.

7. Preparation of test items.

The above may be offered in an encompassing unit or divided to meet the purpose of the instructor. These lessons should not last more than 6-8 class days if the course is to include one-point speeches and the longer seven-minute speeches.

I. Introduction and Rationale

Basic to the process of effective communication are the elements of practice and understanding. First, the practice that is necessary to master a skill. Secondly, the understanding as to what constitutes communication. In a course designed to train communication skills and make students better communicators, it is obvious that intermediate steps must be taken between discussions and activities dealing with concepts in communication and the concluding trial by fire where a student must demonstrate his capabilities and understandings.

We propose that such an intervening step might be a nine- to ten-lesson unit using the one-point speech as a vehicle for practice prior to a longer, more involved activity. There are certain advantages to this approach: (1) The student is initiated without being overwhelmed, (2) the skills necessary are transitional and utilitarian, (3) it is a good point at which to demonstrate for the student the usefulness in communication of careful topic selection and subject matter limitation.

In addition, the one-point speech technique is worthy in itself. Monroe and Ehninger explain that, "There are many speaking situations in which, instead of presenting a long and complex talk, you wish only to explain or to prove a single point. The need for such "one-point" speeches arises in class discussions and informal arguments, or on occasions requiring reports or instructions. Moreover, speeches to entertain customarily consist of a series of stories or anecdotes unified around one humorous thought.

Besides being useful in actual speaking situations, the one-point speech is valuable as a learning device. Attempt to explain or prove just one idea at first, and leave until later the longer and more complex types of speaking. If while you talk you are able to keep your eye on one point rather than several, you will be less apt to ramble over a number of unrelated thoughts or to propound vague abstractions and generalities. Then, too, most long and complex speeches are actually a series of one-point talks tied together into a more comprehensive line of explanation or argument. Hence, in learning how to develop one-point talks, you are mastering a skill required in longer speeches.

II. Course Length

Speech Communication 111: 10 weeks, three days a week (M-W-F)

Unit in One-Point Speech: Three weeks or ten lessons. Six speaking minutes before class for each student.

III. Sources and Materials

Allan H. Monroe and Douglas Ehninger, Principles and Types of Speech, 6th Edition, (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, & Company), 1967, Chapter 11.

Terry A. Welden and Huber W. Ellingsworth, Effective Speech Communication, (Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Company), 1968, Sections 2, 4, and 5.

Norman E. Gronlund, Stating Behavioral Objectives for Classroom Instruction, (Toronto: The MacMillan Co.), 1970, pp. 20-25.

IV. Objectives

The student will be able:

1. to define the one-point speech in terms of its practical application as an exercise to inform, explain, prove or entertain.

2. to demonstrate proper use of outlining as supporting speech communication technique.

3. to choose and select limited topics and subjects appropriate to one-point speeches.

4. to explain the principles of visual supporting materials and demonstrate their proper use.

5. to identify the seven forms of verbal supporting material and demonstrate the use of at least two of them (number may vary).

6. to compose and deliver one-point speech with proper organization and supporting material.

7. to demonstrate communication ability by means of a second one-point speech with pre-test and post-test to measure shift in audience knowledge of subject area.

V. Activities

The assignments will be made in the form of activities to be completed by each of the class members. Evaluation is done according to the desires of the instructor and class, and the appropriate value given to the various projects. These activities are divided into the following six areas:

1. What is the one-point speech? A discussion of the basic parts and types. A resume by types:
   a. Simple one-point speech to explain
      (1) State point to be explained.
      (2) Bring in supporting material (especially explanation, comparisons, and visual devices.)
      (3) Restate the point explained.
   b. Simple one-point speech to prove (didactic)
      (1) State point.
      (2) Make it clear by explanation, comparison, or illustration.
      (3) Prove it by specific instances, testimony, statistics, or additional actual illustrations.
      (4) Restate your point as an established conclusion.
   c. Simple one-point speech to prove (implication)
      (1) Present an analogy or illustration which implies the point you wish to make clear.
      (2) Offer additional illustrations, instances, statistics, or testimony which points inevitably to this conclusion without actually stating it.
      (3) Show specifically how these facts lead to the conclusion; use explanation, if necessary.
      (4) Definitely state your point as a conclusion.
   d. Simple one-point speech to entertain
      (1) Should consist of a series of illustrations, stories, anecdotes, and humorous comments following one another in rapid order.
      (2) Develop around central idea. It should have some significance and merit.
      (3) The following is a suggested way to arrange material--by steps:
         (a) relate a story or anecdote.
         (b) state essential idea.
         (c) follow with a series of additional stories, anecdotes that amplify or illuminate the central point. Arrangement should be of increasing interest or humor.
         (d) close with striking or novel restatement of central point you have developed.

2. After class discussion on verbal supporting materials, the student will receive a handout with 14 examples of the 7 uses of such material (unidentified as to type). The class will match the use with the appropriate example. A discussion of the task will be discussed the following day. The forms of verbal support are: (1) explanation (simple, direct, or concise); (2) analogy or comparison (figurative or

or literal); (3) illustration (hypothetical, factual); (4) specific instance; (5) statistics; (6) testimony; and (7) restatement.

3. At this point there should be definite classroom demonstrations of visual support that illustrate an understanding of the principles of visual material:
   a. Do not interfere with audience sight lines by putting your body in front of your visuals.
   b. Relate it to point you are presenting and refer only to those parts of chart that are relevant.
   c. Be sure the visual aid is large enough to be seen.
   d. Present visually only data which are simple enough to be comprehended at a glance; use few words, large dark print, avoid mass of meandering or crisscross lines, use vivid colors, and only one idea per chart.

4. In preparation for speaking activity, the class members will present materials for a proposed one-point speech. This material will also include an outline of main points arranged on a 4x6 card.
   a. The student should be able to:
      (1) Select a topic that is specific and understand how to limit it.
      (2) Demonstrate ability to limit material to confines of one-point speech.
      (3) Outline a speech that will support proper communication.
   b. The speech must:
      (1) Follow suggested procedures explained in the first activity.
      (2) Be supported by one visual aid.
      (3) Include two examples of verbal support (minimum).
5. Each student will deliver the prepared one-point speech to an audience (the class) on a preassigned day. Evaluation will be done by the instructor (formally) and the class (informally).

6. The final activity will revolve around a second one-point speech for each class member. This must be a new topic area developed again under the guidelines previously established for the one-point speech. To measure communication skills, however, the student will prepare four test items in addition to his speech for the purpose of pretesting and post-testing his audience. The instructor will establish the necessary mechanics for evaluation of this exercise.

# Unit Plan - One Point Speech

| Monday | Wednesday | Friday |
|---|---|---|
| | | 1<br>What is a One Point Speech |
| 2<br>Verbal Supporting Material | 3<br>V.S.M. (cont.) ½<br>½ Visual Support Material | 4<br>Topic Selection<br>Topic Limitation<br>Outline Writing |
| 5<br>In class 1pt.S. without Testing 12-13 students | 6<br>same as # 5 | 7<br>InClass 1.pt.S. with Pre and Post Test 6 students |
| 8<br>same as # 7 | 9<br>same as # 7 | 10<br>same as # 7<br>Unit quiz if time will permit |

EDITORIAL RESPONSE TO "Unit Plan--One-Point Speech"

Here is a unit we highly recommend to teachers of the basic course. Obviously, the basic assumptions listed under "I. Orientation and Introduction to the Course" should obtain before the unit is begun, but those listed under "II. Course Content before the unit on the one-point speech" need not, necessarily. Many of these principles could accrue as products of the unit, so that this unit could feasibly be the first in the course. At any rate, in our opinion, it is desirable to get students speaking as early in the course as possible.

Floren and Upshaw list six minutes of speaking time for each student during the unit. Speaking time for each student could almost be doubled, however, if time on the first one-point speech were set at four minutes and the second, at six. These limits would still allow the teacher to function according to the "Unit Plan."

Both the Objectives and Activities listed by the authors are excellent. Unfortunately, they do not explain how the activities will be incorporated. If each student is allowed to select and narrow his own subject and also the style in which it will be couched and delivered, there will probably be sufficient diversity to provide examples of each of the four kinds of one-point speeches Floren and Upshaw discuss. The teacher might find it advisable to check with each student, and assign one or two of the types, if need be, so that all types are illustrated for the class as a whole. The form of each type, as well as the Forms of Verbal Supporting Material could be reinforced during discussion after each day's round of speeches, preferably following the first assignment. In this way, each student will have a much better idea as to how to proceed on his second one-point speech. The use of visual aids should likewise be incorporated into the first assignment, so that students will be better able to determine whether or how they will use visual material in the second.

We have taken the liberty of suggesting the following modifications in how the ten days of the unit might be utilized. It is expected, of course, that each teacher will adapt the unit to his particular students.

UNIT PLAN--ONE-POINT SPEECH

10-Day Unit

1st Day: What Is A One-Point Speech?
a. Topic limitation
b. Outlining

c. Assign topic selection in terms of presenting a one-point speech in one of the following forms:
(1) to explain
(2) to prove (didactic)
(3) to prove (implication)
(4) to entertain
} Explain and illustrate each of the forms.

2nd Day: Verbal Supporting Material. Illustrate in terms of the various one-point speech forms above.

3rd Day: Visual Supporting Material. Illustrate its use for the various one-point speech types. Assign use of visual aids in first four-minute, one-point speech. Check student intentions to assure that all types are represented. May be necessary to assign one or two forms in order that all four types may be illustrated.

4th Day: Eight four-minute, one-point speeches. Eighteen minutes remaining devote to discussing and briefly explaining the development of each type, as well as suggestions for the speakers regarding delivery and use of visual aids. Assign second one-point speech, six minutes.

5th Day: Same as 4th Day.

6th Day: Same as 4th Day. Conclude first one-point speeches. Explain how pre- and post-tests will be administered on the six-minute speech.

7th Day: Six six-minute, one-point speeches, with pre- and post-tests.

8th Day: Same as 7th Day.

9th Day: Same as 7th Day.

10th Day: Same as 7th Day. Unit Quiz if time permits.